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RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC
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DEPT FOR R-U/S HUGHES, ECA, NEA/FO-DAS CARPENTER,
S/P-JCOHEN, NEA/PI, AND NEA/ARP

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/05/2017

TAGS: EAID SOCI SCUL AE

SUBJECT: EMIRATES FOUNDATION: PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS
FOR SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL REFORM

REF: ABU DHABI 949

Classified By: Classified by Ambassador Michele J. Sison
for reasons 1.4 (d).

¶11. (C) On June 28 Emboffs met with Peter Cleaves, Emirates Foundation CEO, to discuss the Foundation's plans to advance intellectual and social growth in the UAE. The Emirates Foundation, launched in 2005 by Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed (MbZ), has an endowment of over USD 100 million from both public and private sector contributors (including Shell, BP, Abu Dhabi National Bank, Microsoft, and Etisalat, the majority UAE-owned telecom).

Promoting Social and Educational Reform

¶12. (U) The Emirates Foundation is promoting social and educational reform in the UAE through projects such as scholarships for graduate studies in Europe and volunteer programs to provide social service opportunities for Emirati youth. The Foundation's volunteer program has 2,300 volunteers and recently assisted with relief efforts in Fujairah. The Foundation also has an "Emiratization" program that seeks to provide Emiratis, particularly women, with skills required to work effectively in the higher management and professional levels of the many multinational corporations that do business in the UAE. The Foundation plans to launch a new service-learning initiative this July, based on the Points of Light program started in Washington, D.C., that links the academic studies of primary and secondary schools with volunteerism in local communities.

¶13. (U) The Emirates Foundation plans to promote the acquisition of scientific and technological knowledge and skills among Emirati youth. The Foundation intends to fund fellowships for visiting research students and promote research and development in order to address gaps in work performed in the UAE in areas such as health care and energy. The Foundation also aims to promote local art and culture, including UAE history/heritage, with plans to support museums and art exhibitions. It also looks toward developing volunteer programs that foster environmental awareness as well as initiatives that encourage community building, recycling, and environmental protection.

¶14. (SBU) UAE Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Mohammed Al Gergawi, the head of the Dubai-based Mohammed bin Rashid Foundation (MbRF), also sits on the board of directors of the Emirates Foundation. Gergawi has emphasized his desire for close -- but indirect -- cooperation and coordination with the USG in identifying ideas, institutions and programs for the MbRF in order to allocate its significant resources

throughout the Arab and Muslim world. Despite the complementary missions and personal interconnections of the two organizations, the foundations are not yet working together -- although Cleaves told Ambassador that he would very much like to cooperate with the larger MbRF.

¶5. (SBU) Comment: Post will remain engaged with the Foundation and will provide the Foundation with information about successful Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) small grant programs for women and youth. We will also suggest that the Foundation consider directly funding broader application of MEPI programs or utilization of MEPI implementing organizations. End Comment.

SISON